

**COUNSELING INTERVENTIONS FOR TRAUMA HEALING
AMONG BOKO HARAM VICTIMS IN KANO STATE**

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INSURGENCY AND THE PHENOMENON OF BOKO HARAM IN NIGERIA

Abstract

The Islamic state in west Africa (ISW) formally known as Jamā'atu Ahlussunnah Lid-da'awah wal-jihad The group of the people of sunnah preaching and Jihad commonly known as Boko Haram based in northern Nigeria, also active in Chad, Niger and Camaroom. Founded by Mohammad Yusuf in 2002, the Group has been led by Abubakar Shekau since 2009. Boko Haram has become more proficient in carrying out attacks. Boko Haram's increasing radicalization led to violent uprising in July 2009 in which its leader was summarily executed. About 2.3 Million people were displaced by the conflict since May, 2013, thus, Thousands were killed. The first Boko Haram attack experienced in Kano was on 20th January, 2012, several attacks were experienced that lead to lost of lives and properties in the state. The paper highlighted on where counseling intervention to heal the trauma among the Boko Haram victims in Kano State. The paper ends by making various recommendations that could be useful in healing trauma among Boko Haram victims. To mention few: 1. The government has to provide professional counseling centers in all the IDP camps in Kano state. 2 . The Ministry of Education should integrate peace education I educational curriculum from primary to tertiary institution. 3. Religion leaders such as Imams and pastors need to have counselling skills, in order to build peace among their followers. 4. Preaching for peace has to be all over the state in order to have a sustainable peace.

Keywords: Insurgency, Boko Haram, Counselling, Intervention.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:-

To counsel means to enlighten to advise to refine and to educate. (Abdulkadir Issa and Isiaka 2015). Abdulkadir (2015) described counseling as a professional help that is given to an individual who is in a temporary state of confusion, disorder, distress, maladjustment and understanding of himself, and the world around him.

An insurgency is a rebellion against authority (for example an authority recognized as such by the United Nation) when those taking part in the rebellion are not recognized as belligerent (law combatant). An insurgency can be fought via counter insurgency warfare, and may also be opposed by measures to protect the population and by political and economic actions of various kinds aimed at undermining the insurgents' claims against the incumbent regime. The nature of insurgency is an ambiguous concept.

Not all rebellions are insurgency. There have been many cases of non-violent rebellions using civil resistance as in the people power revolution in the Philippines in the 1980th that ousted president Macros and the Egyptian Revolution of 2011. Where a revolt takes the form of armed rebellion, it may not be viewed as an insurgency if a state belligerency exists between one or more sovereign states and rebel forces.

The Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA) formally known as Jama'at ahli as-sunnah Da'awad wal-jihad (Group of the people of sunnah preaching and jihad) and commonly known as Boko Haram until March 2015, is a Jihad militant organization based

in Northern Nigeria, also active in Chad, Niger and Northern Cameroon, founded by Muhammad Yusuf in 2002, the group has been led by Abubakar Shekau since 2009. When Boko Haram first formed, their actions were nonviolent. The main goal was to “purify Islam in Northern Nigerian (Iyekekpolo 2016:2218) from March 2015 to August 2016; the group was aligned with the Islamic state of Iran and the Levent. Since the current insurgency started in 2019, Boko Haram has killed tens of the southern are displaced 2.3 million from their homes and was ranked as the worlds deaiaest terror group by the Global Terrorism indene in 2015.

After its founding in 2002, Boko Haram’s increasing radicalization led to a violent is uprising in July 2009 in which its leader was summer by executed. The Boko Haram insurgency begins in 2009, when the Jihadist rebel group Boko Haram started an armed rebellion against the government of Nigeria. The aim of Boko Haram militant is to institute Sharia Law on Nigerian in 2012; tensions within Boko Haram resulted in gradual split of the group between salafist conservation factions led by Abu Usamatul Al-ansari, and the more dominant violent faction led by Abubakar Shekau by 2015, part of the group split into Al-Qaeda affiliated Ansaru and Shekau’s faction become is ISIL’S west Africa branch.

In 2013, over 1,000 people died as a result of the conflict. The violent escalated dramatically in 2014 with 10,849 deaths in 2014, the insurgency spread to neighboring Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Those becoming a major regional conflict. In 2015 a coalition offensive force Boko Haram to retreat into the

Sambisa Forest. The insurgency took place within the context of long-standing issues of religious violence between Nigerian Muslims and Christians communities. Boko Haram has been called the deadliest terrorist group, in term of the number of the people it has killed in the some view, family, friends and the relatives of the people died in the Boko Haram were traumatized, which necessitated the intervention of counseling sector to head the trauma of the victims.

Healing from a devastating past requires affective aroma therapy techniques, emotional and psychological trauma is the result of extraordinary stressful events that shatter your sense of security, making you feel helpless in a dangerous world. Traumatic experience often involve a threat to life or safety, but any situation that leaves you feeling overwhelmed and isolate can be traumatic, even if it does not involve physical harm.

Healing from trauma is not easy according to Susanne M. Dillman, Psy D, a therapist in Escondido, California “leaning about the status of healing can be distressing, motivating, upsetting to do she says. However, the best thing to do she says is to joint acknowledge your emoltional response to the status of healing. This will allow you to “harness your emoltions energy”

2.0 BOKO HARAM ATTACKS IN KANO

On 20th January 2012, after Friday prayers, a group of gunmen in Police uniforms entered five Police building and freed all the inmates. They proceeded to bomb the buildings, as well as two immigration officers and the local office of the state security

service in Kano. They later drove around the city in cars and motorcycles, shooting pedestrians and battling with Police. Among the dead was television reporter Eneche Akogur, shot while covering the aftermath of the terrorist attacks (vanguard news).

Boko Haram drop letters written in Hausa at the site of attacks, announcing that they were protesting the continued detention of Boko Haram members. They also directly contacted the press to claim responsibilities for the attacks. Officials in the city responded by setting a curfew and by initiating armed patrol of major streets, though sporadic gunfire was still heard the next day.

The Kano State Government ordered all hospitals in Kano Arca to treat victims free of charge. Africa Union chairman jean pain condemned the attacks and said that the union “rejects terrorism in all its forms” and united National Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon Condemned the attacks as well.

On 23rd January the government announced the death toll had rise to 185 people, 150 of whom were civilian and at least 32 Police officers, including 3 members of the secret police. Local Security forces announced they had found 10 unexpected car bombs and almost 300 smaller homemade bombs around the city. The Emir of Kano State Ado Bayero and Governor Rabi’u Musa Kwankwaso than led a prayer for the victims of the attacks.

According to the website 247 reports.com, a Bopko Haram spokesmen indicated that the attacks were carried out due to a

failure by the state government to pay protection money (Mishelizz, Ibrahim 2012).

According to a vanguard news reporters Ndahi Marama (2012) the Boko Haram sect has given reason for its weekend attacks which led to the killing of about 162 people in Kano State, saying it was to avenge the persecution of its members. Spokesmen of the group, Abul Qaqa made this statement known in a telephone interview with newsmen in Maiduguri in December 2011. Claiming the attacks and multiple bombings on Police Stations, State Security Services, (SSS) and passport office buildings in Kano metropolis, Qaqa said: "Last night's (Friday) attacks and bombings of Kano city followed our warning in the second week of December, 2011". We warned Kano stakeholders besides Qaqa also referred reporters to an e-mail message in which Imam Muhammad Abubakar Shekau, Spiritual Head of the sect, threatened that "unless urgent steps are taken, the group will launch endless and violent attacks on Kano and its environment because of the arbitrary arrest and persecution of his members" Vanguard News learns that in the said e-mail, Shekau said the group had written an open letter to the people of Kano, including the Emir of Kano, Alh. Ado Bayero, Governor Rabi'u Musa Kwankwanso, Alh. Aminu Dantata and Khalifa Sheikh Isiyaku Rabi'u on recent happenings in the ancient city (Vanguard News 2012).

According to the BBC News, Boko Haram attacked Kano central mosque on 28th November, 2014. When the Friday prayers were under way three bombs detonated when the prayers had just started. According to eyewitness, two blasts were in the

courtyard, while the third was on a nearby road, the Imam was about to start prayer when he saw somebody in a car trying to force himself into the mosque. But when people stopped him, he detonated the explosions people started running helter – skelter”. Following to the explosions gunmen open fire at people.

According to the National Police spokesman Emmanuel ojukwu, the shooting. Wikipedia reports that. On 28th November, 204 two suicide bombers blew themselves up and gunmen opened fire on those who were trying to escape around 120 people were killed and another 260 injured.

2.1 THE ROLE OF COUNSELING IN TRAUMA HEALING

Counseling is an interaction between two or more people in which one is more knowledgeable and psychologically trained to render help. Ojukwu (2010) defined counseling as to help the individual of understanding self and environment, so as to make and to carry out decision and plans to hols potentials for the achievement of satisfactory life goals.

Insurgency is not an infection; the victims can be rehabilitated through counseling. Counseling can greatly reduce the impact of negative effect on an individual and allow positive change and progress (standeven 2003). These individuals experience trauma, disorganization, fear, low self-concept and uncertainly that could be solved through positive attitude toward them through counseling (Abasi 1988).

According to Oxford Advance Learned Dictionary Trauma means a mental condition caused by severe shocks, especially when the harmful effects last for a longtime or an unpleasant experience that makes you feel upset and or anxious. While this ward healing defined as the process of becoming or making something health against, the process of getting better after an emolsional shock.

2.2 EMULTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA

Emultinal and psychological trauma is the result of extraordinary stressful events that shelter your security, making you feel helpless in a dangerous world. Traumatic experiences often involve a threat to life or safety, but any situations lives you overwhelmed and isolate can be traumatic, event if it doesn't involve physical harm. It is not the objective fact, but your subjective emoltional experience of the event the more frightened and helpless you fell, the more likely you are to be traumatized HELP GUID (Help guide erg 2018).

Causes of emoltional and psychological trauma

- One-time event, such as an accident, injury, or violent attack, especially if it was unexpected or happed in childhood.
- Ongoing relentless stress such as living in crime-ridelen neighborhood, battling a life-treating illness or traumatic events that occur repeatedly, such as bullying, domestic violence, or childhood neglects.
- Commonly overlooked causes, such as surgery (especially in the first 3 years of life). The sudelen death of someone

close, the breakup of a significant relationship, or a humiliating or deeply disappointing experience, especially if someone was deliberately cruel.

Symptoms of trauma

We all react in different ways to trauma, experiencing a wide range of physical and emotional reaction. There is no “right” or “wrong” way to think, feel, or respond, so don’t judge your own reactions or those of other people or your responses or Normal reaction to abnormal events.

Emotional & psychological symptoms

- Shock, denial, or disbelief
- Confusion, difficulty concentrating
- Anger, irritability, mood swing
- Anxiety and fear
- Guilt, shame, self-blame
- Withdrawing from others
- Feeling sad or hopeless
- Feeling disconnected or numb

Physical symptoms

- Insomnia or nightmares
- Fatigue
- Being startled easily
- Difficult concentrating
- Racing heartbeat
- Edginess and agitation
- Aches and pains
- Muscles from trauma

2.3 HEALING FROM TRAUMA

Trauma symptoms typically last from a few days to a few months. Gradually fading as you process the unsettling event.

But even when you are feeling better, you may be troubled from time to time by painful memories or emotions-especially in response to triggers such as an anniversary of the event or something that reminds you the trauma.

If your psychological trauma symptoms don't ease up-or if they become even worse and you find that you are unable to move on from the event for a prolonged period of time, you may be experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) ([articles/ptsd-trauma/ptsd-symptoms-self-help-treatment.htm](https://www.verywellmind.com/articles/ptsd-trauma/ptsd-symptoms-self-help-treatment.htm)).

While emotion trauma as a harmed response to a disturbing event, it becomes PTSD when your nervous system gets "stuck" and you remain in psychological shock, unable to make sense of what happened or process your emotion.

Whether or not a traumatic event involves death, you as a survivor must cope with the loss, at least temporarily of your sense of safety. The natural reaction to this loss is grief. Like people who have lost a loved one, you need to go through a grieving process. ([/articles/grief/coping-with-grief-and-loss.htm](https://www.verywellmind.com/articles/grief/coping-with-grief-and-loss.htm)).

Trauma healing techniques

Healing from a devastating past requires effective trauma therapy techniques. Healing from trauma is not easy. According to Susanne M. Dillman, Psy D, a therapist in Escondido, California, "learning about the steps of healing can be distressing, motivating, upsetting." However, the best thing to do she says is to just acknowledge your emotion response to the stages of healing. This will allow you to "harness your emotion energy".

According to James S. Gardon, MD May 2015 as a psychiatrist trauma for more than 20 years, I have seen and heard stories of violence, genocide, abuse and loss from many places around the world. The context differs but people everywhere share the same emotions of grief, anxiety, anger and depression that grip us in the aftermath of a traumatic events "Anyone can learn these skills and with practice they can positively impact the way you respond to every stress.

Lawrence Robinson et al (2018) Draw the Four trauma recovery tips. Below are the tips.

1. **Get Moving:-** Trauma disrupt your body's natural equilibrium, freezing you in a state of hyperarousal and fear. As well as burning off adrenaline and releasing endorphins, exercise and movement can actually help repair your nervous system try to exercise for 30 minutes or more exercise that is rhythmic and engage both your arms and legs- such as walking, running, swimming, basketball are or even dancing works best. Add a mindfulness element. Instead of focusing on your thoughts or distracting yourself while you exercise really focus on your body and how it feels as you move. Notice the sensation example, or the rhythm of your breathing or the feeling of wind on your skin. Rock climbing, boxing, weight training, or martial arts can make this easier-after all you need to focus on your body movement during these activities in order to avoid injury.
2. **Don't isolate:-** following a trauma, you may want to withdraw from others, but isolations only make things

worse. Connecting to others face to face will help you heal so make an effort to maintain your relationship and avoid spending too much time alone.

You don't have to talk about trauma, connecting with others does not have to mean talking about the trauma. In fact, for some people, that can just makes things worse comfort comes from feeling engaged and accepted by others.

Ask for support:- while you don't have to talk about trauma itself, it is important you have someone to share your feeling with face to face. Someone who will listen attentively without judging you to a trusted family member, friend counselor or clergymen.

Join support group for trauma supervises being with other who are facing the some problems can help reduce your of isolation and hearing how others cop can help inspire in your own recover volunteer. As well as helping others, volunteering can be a great way to change the sense of helplessness that often accompanies trauma. Remind yourself of your stretches and claim your sense of power by helping others.

Vocal toning:- as strange as it sounds; vocal toning is a great way to open up to social engagement. Sit straight and simply make "mmm" sounds. Change the pitch and volume until you experience a pleasant vibration in your face.

3. **Self-regulate your nervous system:-** No matter how agitated, anxionug, or out of control you feel, it is important to know that you can change your arosal system and calm yourself. Not only will it help relieve the

anxiety associate with trauma but it will also engender a greater sense of control.

Mindful breathing:- if you are feeling disoriented, confused, or upset, a quick way to calm yourself is through mindful breathing simply take 20 breaths, focusing your attention on each art breath.

Sensory input:- does a specific sight, smell or taste quickly make you feel calm; or may be putting and animal or listening to music works to quickly smooth you?

Everyone responds to sensory input a little differently, so experiment with different quick stress relief techniques to find what works best for you.

Staying grounded:- to feel in the present and more grounded, sit on chair feel your feet on the ground and your back against the chair. Look around you and pick six objects that have red or blue in them. Notice how your breathing gets deeper and calmer. Allow yourself to feel what you feel when you feel it. Acknowledge you're feeling about the trauma and they arise and accept them.

4. **Take care of your health:-** It is true: having a healthy body can increase your ability to cope with the stress of trauma.

Get plenty sleep after a traumatic experience, worry or fear may disturb your sleep patterns. But lack of quality sleep can exacerbate your trauma symptoms and make it harder to maintain your emotional balance. Go to sleep and get up at the same time each day and aim for 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night.

Avoid alcohol and drugs their use can worse your trauma symptoms and increase feeling of depression anxiety and isolate. Eat a well-balance diet. Eating small, well-balance

meal thought the day will help you keep your energy up and minimize mood swing. Avoid sugary and fried foods and eat plenty omega 3 fats-such as soya beans, salmon, walnut and flax seeds – to give your mood a boost.

Reduce stress:- try relaxation techniques such as meditation Yoga, or deep breathing exercises. Schedule time for activities that bring or joy such as favorite hobbit.

2.3 PROFESSIONAL THERAPY FOR TRAUMATIZED VICTIMS

Recovering from trauma takes time and everyone heals at their own pace. But if months have passed and your symptoms are not letting up, you may need professional help if you are;-

- Having trouble functioning at home or work.
- Suffering from severe fear, anxiety, or depression.
- Unable to form close, satisfying relationships
- Experiencing terrifying memories, nightmares, or flashbacks.
- Avoiding more and more things that remind you of the trauma.
- Emotional numb and disconnected from others.
- Using alcohol or drugs to feel better working through trauma can be scary, painful and potentially re-traumatizing so this healing work it best done with the help of an experienced trauma specialist.

Finding the right therapist may take sometimes. It is very important that the therapist you choose has experience treating trauma. But the quality of the relationship with your therapist is equally important. Choose trauma specialist you feel comfortable with. If you don't feel safe, respected or understood, find another therapist.

2.4 TREATMENT FOR TRAUMA

In order to heal from psychology and emotional trauma, you will need to solve the unpleasant feeling and memories you have long avoided, discharge pent-up “fight-or flight energy, learn to regulate strong emotions and rebuild your ability to trust other people. A trauma specialist may use a variety of different therapy approaches in your treatment.

Somatic experiencing:- focuses on bodily sensations, rather than thoughts and memories about the traumatic event. By concentrating on what is happening in your body, you can release pent-up trauma-related energy through shaking, crying and other forms of physical releases.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy helps you process and evaluate your thought and feeling about trauma.

EMDT (eye Movement Desensitization and reprocessing) incorporates elements of cognitive-behavioral therapy with eye movement or other forms of rhythmic left-right stimulation then can “Unfreeze” traumatic memories (HELPGUIDE.ORG2018).

CONCLUSION

This paper examined how Boko Haram traumatized the people of Kano State and the Northern Nigeria as a whole. Healing from a devastating past requires effective trauma therapy techniques. It is always a good step to seek professional help especially if the trauma is too great. However, you can also apply certain techniques to help along the way such as learning about the stage of healing can be distressing motivating,

upsetting or uplifting. However, the best thing to do is to just acknowledge your emotional response to the stage of healing. All hands should be on deck to ensure the efficient counseling services in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is necessary for the government and the policy makers to come up with the policies that will make a better life to IDPS and the insurgencies victims in Nigeria.
- The government has to provide professional counseling centers in all Boko Haram IDP camps in Kano State.
- The ministry of education should integrate peace education in educational curriculum from primary schools to tertiary institutions.
- There need to have a media propagation on peace education all over the country.
- Religion leaders such as Imam and pastors need to have counseling skill, in order to build peace among their followers.
- Preaching for peace has to have a sustainable peace.

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